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Abstract

Philosophy and theology in the thought of early Heidegger

Eiichi Katayanagi

Heidegger made a lecture, which had the title “phenomenology and theology,” at the end of his happy period in Marburg (1927). In this lecture Heidegger distinguishes the theology which belongs to positive science from the philosophy as ontology which treats ‘Being’ as such. Heidegger acknowledges however the extraordinary place of the theology among positive sciences. The object of theology is the faith. According to Heidegger the faith that is the object of theology is not known psychologically. The faith is the existential way of human being (Dasein). The primal object for the faith is Christ, the crucified God who manifests himself only to the person of faith who exists in his historical situation.

Theology is the science of faith. She has her own difficulty. She must have exact concept suitable for her object whose first characteristic is its incomprehensibility. Theology must express this incomprehensibility conceptually. In this sense theology does not lighten the faith, but make it difficult. This task belongs to theology as such. Theology must execute this task himself. What relation has then philosophy to theology? Heidegger asserts that the task of philosophy is the ontological ‘corrective’ concerning preontological concepts of theology. The corrective does not mean here the function of inspection. The verb from which the corrective derives means “lead together” (con-rego). In our case the corrective of philosophy stand under the primal direction (primal leadership) of the faith. Philosophy designates the ontological dimension where the faith take place. Each theological concept contains the understanding of Being that each human being has in itself. Every person of faith has his own prechristian condition in the overcome state. For example, Heidegger says, sin (Sünde) has debt (Schuld) as her prechristian, ontological dimension which every human being necessarily has solong as he exists. Theology and philosophy can stand in opposition which man names death enemy. But they also have the possibility of partnership, when they acknowledge their own function.